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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 001665

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/19/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [EFIN](#) [ETTC](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: TFI201: FONMIN MUASHER AGAIN RAISES JORDANIAN  
CONCERN ON O-F-F SUSPENSION; NEED FOR QUICK UNSC ACTION TO  
AUTHORIZE COTECNA OPERATIONS OUTSIDE IRAQ

Classified By: Ambassador Edward W. Gnehm. Reasons 1.5 (b,d).

[1](#)1. (C) During a March 19 meeting with Ambassador on a number of subjects, FonMin Muasher raised the GOJ's concern with the current suspension of the Oil For Food (OFF) program. Muasher told the Ambassador that Jordan's mission in New York has been told that shipments currently en route to Iraq must be sent back because there is no Cotecna staff left in Iraq to verify the arrival of the goods. Jordan has long feared that such a scenario would have a serious negative impact on Jordanian banks, which have financed O-F-F exports to Iraq. (Muasher's assistant Ali al-Ayed subsequently confirmed to Econ/C that Jordan's UN Mission has raised Jordan's concerns directly with the UN's Office of the Iraq Program.)

[1](#)2. (C) Muasher noted that its UN Mission understands that the U.K. intends to put forward a resolution soon after hostilities begin to revise procedures for the O-F-F program. These would hopefully allow Cotecna to carry out its functions in the countries neighboring Iraq. "We need that done quickly," Muasher stressed, "its extremely important to us."

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[1](#)3. (C) We agree completely with Muasher that whatever UNSC action is needed to resume the O-F-F program be done as quickly as possible -- both to ensure the health of Jordan's banking system, and more broadly to facilitate delivery of humanitarian supplies to Iraq's civilian populations.

GNEHM